

STATE HOUSE COMMISSION
PROPOSED MEETING AGENDA

March 24, 2025 – 9:30 a.m.

Committee Room 7 - Floor

State House Annex, Trenton, NJ

Email: StateHouseCommission@treas.nj.gov

Formal action may be taken at the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER:

- ~ Assad Akhter, Deputy Chief of Staff, Legislative Affairs
(on behalf of Governor Philip D. Murphy)
- ~ Aaron Binder, Deputy State Treasurer
(on behalf of State Treasurer Elizabeth Maher Muoio)
- ~ Tariq Shabazz, Acting Director Office of Management & Budget
- ~ Senator Bob Smith
- ~ Senator Anthony Bucco
- ~ Assemblyman John DiMaio
- ~ Assemblywoman Eliana Pintor Marin

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Approval of the October 21, 2024 and December 9, 2024 State House Commission (SHC) Meeting Minutes--The verbatim record of the October 21, 2024 and December 9, 2024, SHC meetings will serve as the official minutes.

NEW BUSINESS:

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY REQUESTS:

2. Project: RPR 23-23, 6 Esther Ave., Block: 322, Lot: 75, Ewing Township, Mercer County

Requesting Party: The State of NJ, Department of the Treasury, on behalf of the Department of Human Services, requests approval to dispose of a single family dwelling, consisting of 2.13 (+-) acres of land and improvements, located at 6 Esther Avenue, in Ewing Township, Mercer County, which has been declared surplus to the department's needs.

Terms: The property will be sold via internet auction for the minimum bid of \$300,000 dollars, the appraised value.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION REQUESTS:

3. Project: Spring Meadow Golf Course, Allaire State Park, Block: 958, Part of Lots: 3, 6 and 7, Block: 959, Part of Lot: 3, Block: 970, Part of Lots: 9 & 13, Township of Wall, Monmouth County.

Requesting Party: The NJDEP, requests approval to enter into a ten (10) year lease agreement, with a ten (10) year renewal term, with Empire Golf Management, LLC for the operation, maintenance and management of the Spring Meadow Golf Course property. The Spring Meadow Golf Course is a fully operational year-round 18-hole public golf course, which includes a restaurant with a bar and a refreshment/snack stand (the "Inn"), and driving range in Wall Township, Monmouth County ("Golf Course Property"), located within Allaire State Park. The proposed leased premises consist of 176.66 (+-) acres on Block 958, part of Lots 3, 6 and 7, Block 959, part of Lot 3 and Block 970, part of Lots 9 and 13. The NJDEP has determined that leasing the property to Empire Golf Management, LLC will not interfere with reasonably anticipated plans for development of the property for recreation and conservation purposes as part of Allaire State Park and that the best interests of the people of the State of New Jersey will be served by allowing the tenant to operate, maintain, improve and manage the golf course property for public use.

The proposed tenant was selected through issuance of a Request for Proposal in May 2024. The May 2024 RFP specified the winning bidder would be required to complete specific capital improvements to the leased premises during the initial 10-year term in order to be eligible for the renewal term. The NJDEP established the minimum bid for the May 2024 RFP through an appraisal.

If the lease is not approved, the NJDEP will have to evaluate whether the issuance of another RFP for the golf course operation is appropriate. However, since the current operation agreement has expired, and the previous operator is in the process of vacating

the leased premises, issuing another RFP, which would most likely result in at least a temporary closure of the golf course to the public.

Terms: The proposed compensation for the lease is an annual rent for the first year of the lease in the amount of three hundred sixty thousand dollars and zero cents (\$360,000.00), with three percent (3%) annual increases for each subsequent year of the lease. Over the proposed twenty (20) year term of the lease agreement, the NJDEP will receive nine million six hundred seventy-three thousand three hundred thirty-four dollars and eighty two cents (\$9,673,334.82) (through a combination of cash rental payments and/or the equivalent documented cost of the required improvements)

4. Project: Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park, Block: 5201.10, Lots 1 and 5.02, Township of Lawrence, Mercer County

Requesting Party: The NJDEP, requests approval to enter into a twenty (20) year lease with Jersey Central Power & Light (“JCP&L”) for the purpose of installing, removing, maintaining, repairing and operating an existing 230-kV aerial electrical transmission line and tower located on 2.0885 (+-) acres within the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park in Lawrence Township, Mercer County. The Aerial Line provides electrical transmission between substations that service the area. This lease will replace and supersede a fifty (50) year lease agreement that was executed in 1959 for a portion of Block: 5201.10, Lot: 1 and a 1959 permit for a portion of Block: 5201.10, Lot: 5.02. NJDEP has determined that the continued operation of the leased premises by JCP&L will not have a negative impact on the public use or enjoyment of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park.

Terms: The proposed annual rent for the first year of the proposed lease is one thousand, eight hundred dollars and zero cents (\$1,800.00) with a three percent (3%) annual escalation for each subsequent year of the lease. The rental rate was established by an appraisal dated February 21, 2023, which valued the proposed lease at \$0.32/square foot. Over the twenty (20) year term of the lease agreement, NJDEP will receive forty-eight thousand, three hundred sixty-six dollars and sixty-seven cents (\$48,366.67).

5. Project: Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park, Block: 5, Lot: 4, Borough of Stockton, Hunterdon County

Requesting Party: The NJDEP, requests approval to vacate one of two sewer line easements that traverse property owned by Michael Odenwald (Block 5, Lot 4 in the Borough of Stockton, Hunterdon County). The easements in question were granted to the NJDEP by Carl and Elaine Cathers (Mr. Odenwald’s predecessors in title) as part of the NJDEP’s acquisition of a nearby property (Block 5, Lot 17) from the Cathers in 2009

("the 2009 Easement"). The second easement was granted to the NJDEP by the Cathers in 2011 and crosses a different part of Lot 4 ("the 2011 Easement"). Mr. Odenwald asserts that the sewer line was constructed in the 2009 easement and has requested that the NJDEP vacate the 2011 easement.

At present, due to conflicting and/or incomplete information in NJDEP files and the Borough of Stockton, the NJDEP (which did not install the sewer line) has not reached a definitive conclusion about whether the sewer line was installed in the 2009 Easement or the 2011 Easement. However, the NJDEP concurs that it does not need two sewer line easements to serve Lot 17 and is willing to vacate the unused one so it does not unduly delay Mr. Odenwald's future development plans for Lot 4. Vacating either the 2009 Easement or the 2011 Easement will not adversely affect the sewer service for Block 5, Lot 17 or operation or public use of the State Park.

Terms: Because the NJDEP never intended to acquire two sewer easements to serve Block 5, Lot 17, and the value of the sewer line easement was taken into account as part of NJDEP's acquisition of Block 5, Lot 17, and no additional compensation is proposed.

6. Project: Monmouth Beach Life Saving Station, Block: 11, Lots: 1 and 1.01, Borough of Monmouth Beach, Monmouth County

Requesting Party: The NJDEP, requests approval to renew a May 18, 2000 lease agreement with the Borough of Monmouth Beach for a twenty (20) year term and to amend the lease to add Block 11, Lot 1.01 (0.06 acre). The initial twenty-four year term of the lease agreement, for a 1.5 acre leased premises, was previously approved by the State House Commission on December 13, 1999. However, at that time, the Department only owned Block 11, Lot 1 (1.09 acre). The Department did not acquire Block 11, Lot 1.01 (0.06 acre) until 2002 (after the lease agreement was executed), therefore it was not included in the lease agreement. The lease agreement allows the tenant to request a twenty (20) year renewal term, but the renewal term was not part of the 1999 State House Commission approval.

Under the 2000 lease agreement, the Borough of Monmouth Beach is authorized to operate, interpret, maintain, improve, repair, restore and preserve the historic former Monmouth Beach Life Saving Station. The lease amendment will add approximately eight (8) parking spaces to the leased premises. The proposed lease renewal and amendment will serve the public's benefit by continuing to allow the tenant to offer cultural, educational, community activities, and free parking for public beach access.

Terms: The proposed compensation for the lease renewal is a one-time payment of twenty (\$20) dollars.

7. Project: Merrill Park, Block: 426, Lot: 1.01, Township of Woodbridge, Middlesex County

Requesting Party: The NJDEP, on behalf of the County of Middlesex ("County") requests approval to allow the diversion of a 0.088 (+-) acre portion of Merrill Park in connection with the Stafford Road Sanitary Sewer Relocation Project being undertaken by the Township of Woodbridge ("Township"). The diversion will consist of the conveyance of a 20-foot-wide subsurface utility easement to the Township for the relocation, operation and maintenance of a new 24-inch diameter sanitary sewer pipe. The new subsurface sewer easement will encompass two areas (0.005 (+-) acre (Diversion area 1) and 0.083 (+-) acre (Diversion area 2) for a total of 0.088 (+-) acre. As part of the transaction, a 0.94 (+-) acre portion of the existing sewer line will be vacated.

The Township currently owns and operates a 10-inch diameter gravity sanitary sewer line that passes through Merrill Park and ends at a Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority trunk sewer line (which also passes through the park). These lines operate within existing 20-foot-wide easements held by the Township. The Township has now determined it is necessary to increase the diameter of the sewer lines to 24 inches and adjust the slope of the sewer line within Merrill Park to eliminate surcharging (backflows) and backups upstream. Since portions of the existing sewer line are in or very close to a tributary to the South Branch of the Rahway River, and also pass under a park roadway bridge and a park pedestrian bridge, relocation of the line within the park is preferable to upgrading the line in place.

Terms: To compensate for the proposed minor diversion, the County proposes to remit \$25,000.00 to the NJDEP's Green Acres program for deposit into the Garden State Preservation Trust Fund. The proposed diversion will not affect any trees, therefore, no tree compensation is due.

8. Project: Duke Island Park, Block: 102, Lots: 10 and Part of 39, Township of Bridgewater, Somerset County, Block: 48, Lot: Part of 10, Township of Hillsborough, Somerset County

Requesting Party: The NJDEP, on behalf of the County of Somerset ("County"), requests approval to allow the diversion of a 0.42 (+-) acre portion of Duke Island Park in connection with the Headgates Dam Removal Project at Raritan River Mile 29.9, located in the Townships of Bridgewater and Hillsborough, Somerset County. The proposed diversion will consist of the conveyance of a 30-foot-wide subsurface utility easement to the Township of Bridgewater ("Township") for the relocation, operation and maintenance of a replacement sewer for an existing 54-inch diameter sanitary sewer pipe.

Terms: To compensate for the proposed diversion, including the associated tree removal, the County will receive a maximum of \$552,652.00 in monetary compensation for a future acquisition of at least 0.42 acre of forested land for recreation/conservation purposes located within the County. This compensation figure is based on a \$6,500 value for the easement itself (the minimum required by the Green Acres rules) and \$546,142.00 for anticipated tree replacement costs (calculated under the formula in the Green Acres rules).

The County will place these funds in a dedicated account to be used for future open space acquisition of at least 0.42 acres of comparable wooded replacement land within six months of obtaining State House Commission approval. In the event the County cannot complete the land acquisition within the six-month period, it will be required to remit the cash compensation to Green Acres for deposit into the Garden State Preservation Trust Fund.

As part of the pre-construction design of the project, the County is committed to determining whether the anticipated tree removal can be reduced (which would reduce the tree replacement payment and total compensation payment).

9. Project: Lafayette Street Park, Block: 1061, Lots: 44 and 47, City of Cape May, Cape May County

Requesting Party: The NJDEP, on behalf of the City of Cape May ("City"), requests approval to allow the City to remove the Green Acres restrictions from 0.137 (+-) acre of parkland in order to allow the City to construct a new police station facility at the intersection of St. John Street and Lafayette Street in the City of Cape May, Cape May County. The City's police department currently occupies a portion of the historic City Hall building and a substation in West Cape May, and is in desperate need of expansion, modernization and parking. Based on analysis, the Department concurs that other non-parkland alternatives are not feasible, reasonable, and/or available as alternate locations.

Terms: As compensation for the proposed diversion, the City proposes to dedicate six tax parcels and various vacated ROW's, totaling 6.607 acres, in fee for recreation and conservation purposes. The proposed replacement land is environmentally sensitive and is located adjacent to land owned by the NJDEP (managed by the Division of Fish and Wildlife as part of the Cape May Coastal Wetland Wildlife Management Area).

10. Project: Riverside/Springstreadah/Patriot Park, Block: 123, Lot: 1, City of Millville, Cumberland County

Requesting Party: The NJDEP, on behalf of the City of Millville ("City"), requests approval to allow the diversion of a total of 0.0418 (+-) acre of Green Acres encumbered parkland at Riverside Park, in connection with the New Jersey Department of Transportation's (NJDOT's) relocation of an existing bridge-mounted sanitary sewer line on the Route 49 Bridge over the Maurice River. The bridge was originally constructed in 1971 and current transportation standards do not allow the line to remain on the bridge. The City of Millville will maintain ownership of the diverted parcel.

Terms: To compensate for the diversion of the underground utility easement and temporary work area, the NJDOT proposes to pay \$27,685.29 to the City of Millville to be used for parkland improvements within the City.

11. Project: Brendon T. Byrne State Forest, Block: 928, Part of Lot: 1, Pemberton Township, Burlington County

Requesting Party: The NJDEP, requests approval to enter into a 24-year lease agreement with the United States of American, acting by and through the Secretary of Agriculture, for the continued use by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Forest Service of a portion of the Silas Little Experimental Forest (Experimental Forest), an area within Brendon T. Byrne State Forest that is used for experiments in forest management, wildfire suppression and climate change. Under a 1934 agreement between the Board of Conservation and Development (now the NJDEP) and the predecessor to the USDA's Forest Service, a portion of Lebanon State Forest (now Brendon T. Byrne State Forest) was set aside to be used by the USDA's Forest Service to conduct various types of forest-related research. As part of this initiative, the USDA's Forest Service constructed various buildings to serve as laboratory space and support facilities for its research. These buildings occupy approximately 5 acres of the 24 acre proposed leased premises (State Forest). Since 1934, the USDA's Forest Service has occupied the proposed leased premises under successive agreements with the State of New Jersey. The NJDEP wishes to continue this mutually beneficial operation.

The most recent lease between the State of New Jersey and the USDA for the Experimental Forest was executed in 1993 and expired in 2013. Since then, the USDA's Forest Service has continued to occupy the proposed lease premises and operate the Experimental Forest as a holdover tenant. The 1993 lease required an annual payment of \$1.00 per year (\$20.00 total).

At this time, the NJDEP seeks approval to enter into a new lease with the USDA's Forest Service for the 24 acre area occupied by the Experimental Forest facilities, infrastructure and core operations.

Terms: Given the technical and financial support that the operation of the Experimental Forest provides to various programs in the State of New Jersey, and the fact that the buildings, infrastructure and related improvements on the proposed leased premises were constructed by and are owned and maintained by the USDA's Forest Service, a nominal one-time rental payment of \$24.00 is proposed.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS:

12. Project: Approval of Outdoor Advertising Waiver #77183, Route I-76, Milepost 2.44 N.R.D., Block: 212.01, Lot: 2, Gloucester City, Camden County

Requesting Party: The NJDOT, requests a waiver from outdoor advertising regulations to allow the issuance of a multi-message/static outdoor advertising permit to Maxwell Interstate, LLC ("Maxwell") for an off-premise sign. The sign would be installed along Interstate Route 76 in Gloucester City ("the City"), in Camden County, on the eastern side of the roadway at milepost 2.44 and visible to northbound and southbound traffic. This application meets the threshold requirement that a waiver can only be granted for signs on public property. The sign is on property owned by Passaic Properties, LLC, in an area over which the City has obtained a permanent easement for the proposed location of the sign. As such, the sign will be located on property over which the City is exercising control such that the property can be deemed public property.

The application submitted by Maxwell proposes the erection of a two-sided sign. One side, a multi-message visible to southbound traffic and the second, static visible to northbound traffic, with each side having a face of 20 feet in height by 50 feet in width, 1,000 square feet per side. In total, the sign will have 2,000 square feet of advertising space. The sign visible to southbound traffic will be electronic.

A waiver is required because the location of the sign did not meet DOT regulatory requirement: N.J.A.C. 16:41C-8.1(d) (2)(i), which provides: If an interchange lacks a pavement widening, a sign shall not be located in that direction within 1,000 feet of the point of gore. In this instance, the sign is located 600 feet from a point of gore within an interchange in the southbound direction of the roadway. There is no interchange issue on the northbound direction.

Terms: The Department intends to grant the waiver, subject to the approval of the State House Commission, and has determined that because this sign has demonstrated: a) public benefit; b) need for the sign; c) public safety; d) compliance with the Federal

Rules and 1971 Federal State Agreements, 23 C.F.R. 750 (Highway Beautification Act) and 23 U.S.C. 131, (Control of Outdoor Advertising Regulations), a waiver is appropriate. The sign will be installed, function and be maintained at no cost to the public. In addition, the sign will be subject to the following conditions:

1. A post construction traffic safety analysis shall be completed.
2. Conformance with all other pertinent outdoor advertising regulations is required.
3. Emergency notices shall conform to established protocols.
4. This waiver is void if it is determined that any sign violated the 1971 Federal Agreement.

DIVISION OF PENSIONS AND BENEFITS' REQUESTS:

13. Requesting Party: The NJ Department of the Treasury, Division of Pensions & Benefits

Terms: The SHC shall sit as the Board of Trustees for the Judicial Retirement System to approve the following:

1. Approval of the Minutes of meeting held on December 9, 2024.
2. Confirmation of Death Claims, Retirements and Survivor Benefits.
3. Presentation of the JRS Actuarial Valuation Report for July 1, 2024.

OTHER BUSINESS (as necessary)

ADJOURNMENT